



**MINUTES OF THE
MARYLAND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
February 4th, 2015**

I. Call to order

The meeting of the Maryland Transportation Commission was held on Wednesday, February 4, 2015, at 10:30AM in the Board Room of the Maryland Department of Transportation.

II. Roll Call

The following Commissioners were present:

Chairman Sudhir Trivedi
Elmer Horsey
Michael Moore
Rajan Natarajan
Carol Petzold
Cathy Riley
Gary Simpson
Mario VillaSanta
William Cox Jr. (joined by phone)
MDOT Staff Ian Beam
MDOT Staff Tina Quinichette

Chairman Sudhir Trivedi called the meeting to order at 10:35AM. The January 7th minutes were approved.

III. Briefing

Mr. Beam introduced Heather Murphy, Deputy Director for Office of Planning and Capital Programming to discuss the current budget hearings. She Began With An Overview Of The HB 1515 – Transportation Infrastructure And Investment Act (TIIA) of 2013 this raised the gas tax in phases over a four year period and tied the tax to the rate of inflation.

Background

In 2013, the Department and the State were faced with a reality that without a meaningful revenue increase, as of 2017, the Department would not be able to fund any new projects and would only be able to spend capital funds on system preservation and maintenance.

At that time, the gas tax in Maryland was 23.5 cents per gallon – and it had remained flat at that rate for over 20 years – even in light of construction costs essentially doubling over the same time period.

Because Maryland had not raised the gas tax in over twenty years, which resulted in a close to 70 percent decline in purchasing power, the revenues were not sustainable to support future transportation projects throughout the State. Not only were there numerous projects lined up and waiting in the queue, ready to be taken off the shelf and moved into construction, but there was a real need to upgrade the State's transportation network. A dollar for transportation in 1992 was only worth about 30 cents, two short years ago (2013).

This legislation resulted in jobs – an investment in infrastructure, both highways and transit, is a clear investment in economic development and the creation of jobs.

In 2013, the General Assembly worked diligently to pass a reasonable, fair and balanced revenue increase.

Ms. Murphy continues with an overview of the Six-Year CTP. This marks the second year in a row that Maryland has been able to provide residents with a record-setting, six year transportation budget – nearly \$16 billion (\$15.8 billion).

Right now, MDOT has nearly \$1 billion in 44 major projects with construction underway statewide thanks to the Transportation Act. And combining operating service assistance and other projects in which we started design or construction, we have committed over \$2.5 billion.

What is scheduled to be advertised this year or projects that have not yet begun are essentially 10 projects totaling \$1.2 billion in State funding. Specifically, there are \$534 million in highway projects that are programmed in the CTP that have not yet begun; and approximately \$1.2 billion in State funding for transit projects programmed in the CTP, which have not yet begun.

The bottom-line is – of the \$4.4 billion in additional revenue from the Transportation Act; approximately \$2.6 billion has already been committed. This leaves about \$1.4 billion of the additional revenue (over a six year period) that is not yet under contract/awarded/or under construction.

Projects that are programmed in the current 6-year CTP but that are not yet awarded include:

- \$95 million for widening of I-695 outer loop construction from US 40 to MD 144;
- \$23 million for construction of MD 30 enhancements from the CSX railroad to North Woods Trail in Hampstead;
- \$155 million to construct the new interchange between I-270 and Watkins Mill Road;
- approximately \$900 million in State funding for the Red Line; or
- approximately \$300 million to \$700 million in State funding for the Purple Line.

Ms Petzol asked about the experience of MDOT new acting Secretary. Does he have experience in mass transit?

Ms. Murphy replied that yes, he came from an MDTA background in New Mexico and he is learning about the MDOT system.

Suhir asked if there was a time constraint for the Red Line. Ms. Murphy replied that there was not and the money has been appropriated and a full fund grant agreement will be drawn up with money allocations. It has to be signed and agreed upon before spending. She added that the Governor did not put money in for local counties and municipalities revenue for transit.. He put in a on e-time grant for the municipalities. He is looking to put 20 million in Baltimore city and the other counties. This may be starting FY15. As for the Silver Line, a discussion may commence after the MTA does its budget hearings.

Mr. VillaSanta asked what we can do to help with the budget decision. Ms. Murphy replied that the administrative is too new and they are still in the education mode.

Mr. Natarajan inquired about an update on the Harry Knights Bridge. Heather explained that there are issues that need addressing before they plan for a nicer bridge to be built by 2020 – 2025. They are planning on a new, wider bridge for replacement.

Mr. Natarajan also asked if the price of the ICC tolls will be reduced. Ms. Murphy explained that MDTA is doing a study on what the effect of reducing tolls would be on the budget. The thinking is that the increase in toll fees helps the ICC to pay off its debt service and system preservation projects which cost millions. This will be presented after session.

Chairman Trivedi thanked Ms. Murphy for her time and an excellent presentation.

IV. New Business

Chairman Trivedi welcomed back Mario Villa Santa after a brief absence. He also prepared a draft letter of welcome for the Secretary. It was review and edited. Mr. VillaSanta asked if there was going to be a reception for the Secretary this year. The Chairman replied no, maybe next year. Mr. Beam mentioned that Mr. Micah Watson has resigned from the commission.

V. Adjournment

Hearing no other items of business, Chairman Sudhir Trivedi adjourned at 11:25AM until March 4, 2015 at MDOT HQ.